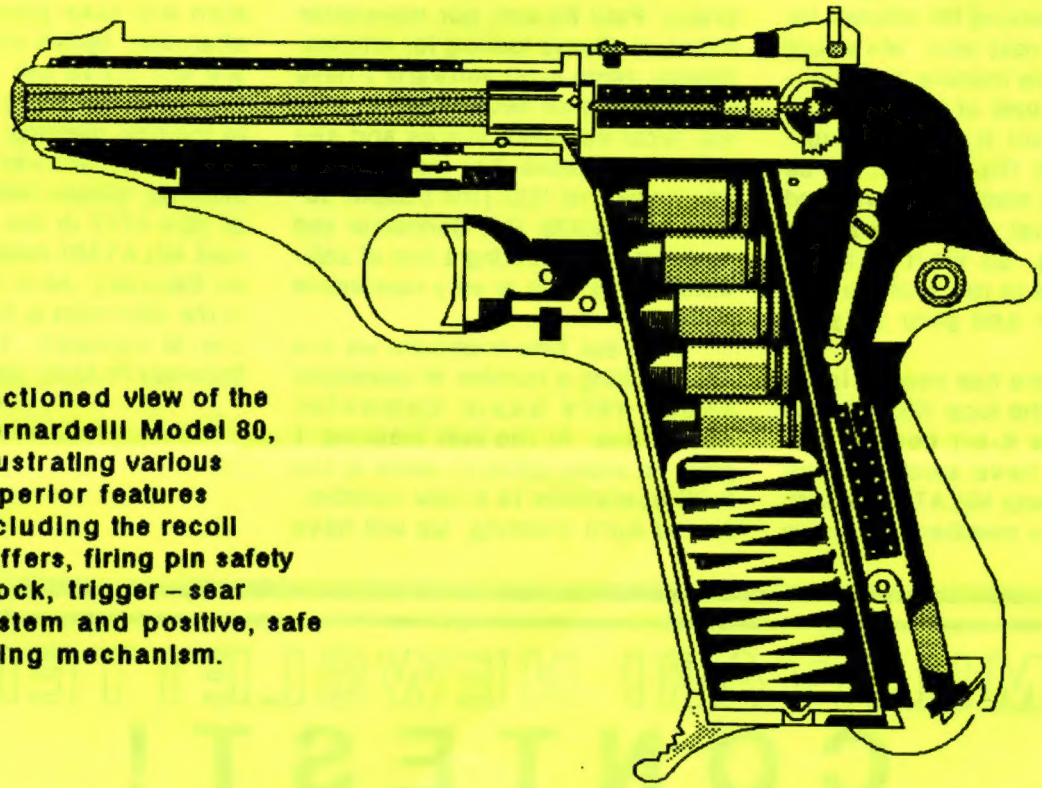
MIL•ATARI MA

Milwaukee Area Atari Users Group

Vol. 6 No. 5 | Price $2.00 | April 1987



Sectioned view of the Bernardelli Model 80, illustrating various superior features including the recoil buffers, firing pin safety block, trigger – sear system and positive, safe firing mechanism.

Drawn with EASY – DRAW by Kevin Mitchell

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY APRIL 25, 12:00 NOON
– ST SIG: 1:00 PM
– INTRO TO COMPUTERS: 12:30 (See The President's Report)

Next Board of Director's Meeting:
Monday, April 27 at 7:00pm
at the Ground Round, Hwy. 100 & Bluemound

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Ron Friedel

There are just a few things to report this month. First of all, Dave Frazer, Gary Nolan and myself together make up a nominating committee that is looking for officers for MILATARI for next year. We would like to talk to any member that wishes to run for one of the elective offices. Do your friends a favor: nominate them! The election will be held at the May meeting but we need to present a list of people at the April meeting. So start thinking about who want to run your club for the next year and give us your ideas.

Lately, there has been a lot of discussion on the local BBSs on the demise of the 8-bit computers. Some of you have said that you wonder which way MILATARI will go with all the new members that have STs. All I can say is that if you want to make sure that we continue to support the 8-bit, you probably need to get more involved in the user group. Paul Kuehn, our newsletter editor, is always looking for articles. Review some 8-bit software. I have just seen some new software; visit our local software stores and see what is available. For instance, do you know that ICD (the people behind SpartaDOS, P:R Connector and Archiver) is marketing a line of software for the 8-bit at very reasonable prices?

With our new members we are again getting a number of questions about very basic computer operations. At the last meeting, I gave an explanation of some of the DOS operations to a new member. At the April meeting, we will have both the 8 and 16-bit computers set up in one of the classrooms and will try to give an Introduction to Computers and Their Uses. This discussion will take place early in the afternoon, before the main meeting. We will try to get started around 12:30 PM. So bring your questions to the next meeting. If you want any questions answered before the meeting, please feel free to call me at 354-1717 in the evenings. The next MILATARI meeting will be held on Saturday, April 25 from 12 till 3 in the afternoon at Curtin Hall on the UW-M campus. This is the 4th Saturday in April; see you then.

Ron

MILATARI NEWSLETTER CONTEST!

WIN A FREE ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL!

Okay, everyone, put on your thinking caps! Our newsletter needs a name! Can you come up with a good one? For the next two months, we will be accepting entries. These entries will then be boiled down to a few finalists by a nominating committee consisting of Gary Nolan, Dale Phillips, Dennis Wilson, and myself. From these finalists one winner will be voted on by the Board of Directors. The winner will have his MILATARI membership extended for an additional year absolutely free!

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This applies whether you have a single or family membership. This contest is open to all current paid-up MILATARI members. Finalists will be nominated at the June 1987 Board of Directors meeting, so entries must be in before then. So, fire up those organic computers of your's and come up with something good!Send your suggestions to:

NEWSLETTER CONTEST
c/o Paul Kuehn
2371 N. 63rd St.
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

FROM THE EDITOR

by Paul Kuehn

Things are really starting to pick up! Reading through this issue, I think you'll notice lots of new contributors. I want to personally thank each and every one of you who took the time to write and submit an article. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by all of us.

As promised in the last newsletter, each of you who contributed are entitled to a Public Domain disk of your choice. Please see Carl Mielcarek at the next meeting, and he will give you a coupon for you to get your disk.

Now, how about the rest of you? Fire up those word processors, and let us know what you're up to! It can even be fun if you let it.

You will be pleased to know that a recent decision by the Board of Directors has made it easier for you to get your articles to me. The newsletter now has its own 1200 BAUD modem, so you can now send your articles directly to me. You can generally do this on evenings or weekends, or, if you can't reach me, upload the articles to our BBS, and I will find them. I would still suggest that you leave a message with me so that I know that your article is there. My phone number, and that of the BBS can be found on the inside back cover of this newsletter.

Perhaps you've noticed that this issue has a slightly different (and, I hope, easier to read) look than the last issue. The good folks at Soft-Logik have released an improved printer font for dot matrix printers which is a great improvement over the old one, which was far too heavy. The new one is still not without its faults, however. Some of these faults I have corrected with their new font editor, but I still have more to do. Ever try to use an object oriented font editor which comes with no documentation? I have done easier things. One curious aspect of this font is that it shows some problems at some sizes, but not at others. And of course, none of these glitches are visible while in the font editor. I would also like to know how changing one letter can mysteriously mess up four others?? Oh, well!

On to other matters. No, I wasn't trying to make a pun with the cover graphic. And no, I'm not a gun freak. But when I saw this, I was simply amazed that a dot matrix printer (my Panasonic KX-P1091) could draw so well, and thought you'd enjoy seeing it too. I guess we can take this as a hint of what to expect if Atari ever releases a finished version of the @*!*@#! GDOS portion of GEM. This picture was drawn with Easy-Draw from Migraph, which incorporates an unfinished version of GDOS.

As a closing comment, if there are any particular areas of interest that you would like to see addressed in this newsletter, please drop me a line. (Or better yet, write an article.) This is, after all, *your* newsletter. If I don't hear from you, all I can do is cover what interests me, and we very well may not have the same interests.

Until next month....

Paul

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Saturday 11-4

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8 - BIT HARDWARE REVIEW

THE SUPRA 1200AT

by John Ewan

Supra's 1200AT modem is one of three direct-connect 1200 baud modems for the 8-bit Atari (by direct connect, I mean that no extra interface need be bought to use it). The other two, being QMI's Q*Modem (which I personally have never seen, used or read about beyond QMI's advertisements), and Atari's own 1200 baud modem (which has yet to be released) have gotten very little publicity. This review focuses on Supra's modem, the hardware itself, included software, Hayes compatibility and some other surprising facts.

The Supra modem is a device that works "right from the box" -- provided the user is good at guessing how the various cables should hook up. What I am getting at is that the documentation accompanying this modem is mediocre at best, bordering on horrible. What they did was include a "1200 Modem User Guide" (I'll get to that issue a bit later) and the manual for the Smart Terminal software which accompanies their 300 baud modems. The "1200 Modem User Guide" addresses a modem which has an RS-232C standard port (which the Supra has) but it makes no mention of how to connect the included custom interface that connects the Atari's SIO port to the modem's RS-232. It was no big deal to figure out, but I really think that the company should provide better documentation.

Power to the modem is supplied by a 9-volt, plug-in adaptor (yes, more tangle to add to the spider web lurking beneath your desk). Once the custom interface is hooked up and the power supply is connected, we are ready to begin telecommunicating.

The software included with the modem demands a disk drive. Unlike the early days of Supra (when it was called MPP) when they included software on cartridge, this software arrives on disk. All you have to do is turn your drive on, insert the program disk, and power up your computer with BASIC either removed or turned off.

The software is quite easy to use, having a main menu from which the user may choose between ASCII / ATASCII translation, X-modem or no protocol, 38/40/64/80 columns (software emulated), baud rate change (only between 300 & 1200 baud), disk functions, downloading, uploading, loading buffers, duplex, autodialing, parity, and many other less important functions. A timer is included that is accurate to hundredths of a second (though I can't figure out why anyone would need this kind of accuracy). With the aid of the manual for the 300 baud modem Smart Terminal program, one can get on-line quite easily, with the exception of changing baud rates, which is potentially confusing (at least it was for me).

There is a button on the modem which switches between 300 and 1200 baud. When the menu says you're at 300 baud, the button must be pushed in, and when you're at 1200, the button must be left out. It's no big deal, as long as the menu value matches the modem.

Some of you who already own modems might be thinking "Gee, the way that modem changes baud rates sounds just like the Avatex" Well guess what? The Supra IS an Avatex! This was some cause for irritation when I first got it (I found out by looking on the bottom of the modem and seeing the word AVATEX) but I'm getting over it. Supra cleverly put their own sticker over the Avatex label on the front of the modem. So, what the Supra 1200AT is in a nutshell is an Avatex modem with a custom interface.

This is cause for both rejoice and revolt. On one hand, there are the computer users who will never need to buy another interface. They have a printer which either has a custom interface of its own (such as Supra's Microprint) or it is a direct connect model such as most of Atari's own printers. On the other hand, there are those people who got a modem first with plans of buying a printer later. The economical route would be to get an interface such as ICD's P:R: Connection and then get cables for the printer and an Avatex modem. I am the victim of the Supra. I was originally planning on getting a P:R: Connection and modem, so I would be ready for a printer, but I read so many bad (mostly FALSE) things about the Avatex that I was turned off from it and (very blindly) went for the Supra. I just recently bought a printer, and was forced to get Supra's own 1150 interface (how ironic). I let Supra know my feelings on their comment cards, but it was probably fruitless.

I can't complain too much though. The modem is Hayes compatible (not fully, but enough to get by). From Smart Terminal, all of the supported "AT" commands do work that are listed in the "1200 Modem User Guide" manual. However, you cannot hang up the phone through software, you must press the DATA / VOICE button on the modem to hang up.

I have already mentioned the issue of baud rate changing. With a device handler (just software on a disk) from Supra, the modem can be made Hayes compatible to run such superb terminal programs as 850 Express! You may autodial from a list of numbers as long as all of the boards that you are attempting to call are at one baud rate. What I mean is that if you were trying to call four boards, and three were 1200 baud and one was 300 baud, you would have to autodial at 300 baud and live with that baud rate (because of the infamous hardware baud rate change). If all of the boards you call are 1200 baud, then there is no problem in autodialing them.

After about six months of using this modem, I have gotten used to its minor quirks and enjoy using it. Smart Terminal software is easy to use, like I said before, and there is always the option of getting Hayes compatible software. What would I recommend a potential modem buyer do? Well, if you have any intention of getting a printer in the near future, get the P:R: Connection and the Avatex (if you can still find it, they have been discontinued) because you will save money in the long run, since you won't have to buy another printer interface like I had to. But, if you are happy with your hardware configuration, and just want to get a modem that will directly connect with your modem with minimal fuss, the Supra would be a good choice.

SUPRA 1200AT

Description:
Direct connect 1200 baud modem for 8-bit Ataris

Hardware Requirements:
48K Atari 8-bit, disk drive

Approximate Price: $159.00

Contact:
Supra Corporation
1133 Commercial Way
Albany, OR 97321

EZRAM 512K MEMORY UPGRADE *FOR ATARI 520 STs*

by Dale Phillips

Well, you have your 520 ST in front of you working on a Data Base and pow, you find out you just ran out of RAM memory! Now what do you do? You can figure out a way of redoing the data, or maybe cut it into 2 parts, which could take some time. Or you could go out and buy the "EZ RAM 512 Upgrade"....

I did just that and this is a review of that product. When you get the upgrade you get a motherboard that has a cable attached to it with a template attached to the other end, and a very well designed instruction sheet that gives very good details on how to install the upgrade. (NOTE: Unless you're sure as to what you are doing inside your computer, have a friend or someone that has installed one before hand do it.) You start out by removing the bottom screws on your ST. Then, after turning the machine back upright you remove the cover and disconnect the keyboard connector. Next, remove the keyboard, and you will see a metal cover. To remove this cover, take out the three screws and bend straight the tabs along the edges. Lift off the cover, and you now have access to the inside of the motherboard.

Now comes the good part, you remove the cover on the video controller chip which is on the middle right hand side. Now carefully remove the videochip and set aside. Taking the EZ ram board, you line up the pins on the bottom of that board as to where the video chip was. Now take the chip you removed before and insert that chip in the space provided on the motherboard, and bend the cable so the attached template lines up with the mmu chip on the left side of the computer's motherboard. Having this done you're almost finished. You take the template and line up the pins from it with the right pins on the mmu, and being able now to see that the pins line up properly you press down the template onto the mmu chip.

That concludes the rough stuff. Now leaving the cover off the video-control box, you reinstall the metal cover and keyboard and top cover back to your computer. Insert the disk that was supplied with the upgrade, which contains a RAM MEMORY TEST and a public domain game. Running the RAMTEST.PRG, you discover that you have 1040 bytes of memory available, minus any overhead for ACC. files. Now, returning to your Data Base you discover you have room to spare.

I've installed 2 of these upgrades now and it took less than 15 minutes for both and I must say that this appears to me to be the best upgrade available for the ST. It does not require any soldering and installs with no difficulty.

The price of the upgrade runs somewhere around $199.00 and I've heard that you can mail order it for around $170.00. If you have any questions, feel free to ask me.

- Dale Phillips, ST Public Domain disk cashier.

TELECOMMUNICATION: WHAT IS IT?

by Rich Dankert, MILATARI BBS Sysop

So you're thinking about getting a modem, but just aren't sure what it could do for you. So you put it off, and put it off, and you're still in the same state, NO MODEM. Well let's look at what's available out there and let you decide.

First off, there is our club's Bulletin board system. With this system right in your back yard, you can keep in contact with all those people that you normally only see once a month at the regular monthly meeting. Then there's the ability to help others through the bulletin board system. Or maybe even, just by looking through the message base, get some answers to some questions that you were afraid to ask, but which some one else asked, and the answer is posted right there for all to read. Then there's the ability to gain access to more program files via the board, for experimentation, learning, or just plain fun. And remember, the best thing about our board is that it's FREE! Now that's a price that can't be beat.

OK, enough of our board system. What else is there. Well there are many other bulletin board systems out there, both local and long distance. The majority of them are also free! You have a host of bulletin board systems to choose from, and I'm talking local. On OUR board there is a very extensive listing of ALL known bulletin board systems that are available in the Milwaukee area. We also keep a listing of long distance systems as a text file.

With a modem, you also have the ability to access many rather large systems, set up just for people that like to telecommunicate. There are two local systems right here in our back yard. S.U.E. (Serious User's Exchange), and PC. Express; right here in Milwaukee. These systems are PAY systems, but are worth the money. Both systems support both the ATARI 8-bit systems and also the newer ST. systems. They both have sections called SIGs, (Special Interest Groups) just for ATARI user's. In these systems you can access even more computer users out there and talk to them, from game playing to programming. One system in town also has what is known as ECHO MAIL, and with this system, you can join in with others across the nation. Their fees are really quite reasonable, and are a one time a year charge; but access time is not counted, so you can call these systems all you wish, and not pay another cent until your yearly dues are up.

There are also long distance systems, like GEnie, Delphi, and Compu-Serve, to name a few, that also support the ATARI. These systems generally charge a one time registration fee, and from then on you pay for the amount of on-line time (time you spent on the system). This ranges from $5.00 per hour at 300 BAUD, with a few that will charge an additional amount for 1200 BAUD access. Reasoning is that since you're at 1200 BAUD, you can get 4 times the information in the same amount of time (1200 baud divided by 300 - four times the info), so they feel that a surcharge should be paid. This is not the case with ALL of these systems, but I felt that you should know about this. These systems are called via a local call, to a system that is called Telenet, which acts as a link between both you and the system that you are calling, such as GEnie. There is a charge for this, but not as a separate bill to you. It is taken into consideration by the service that you may decide to join, and that's what they base their hourly charges on. On these systems, you can do everything from just going to the SIG, in our case, the ATARI SIG, and transferring text information, to being able to retrieve programs that they also store just for the ATARI in the SIG's data base section. You also have the ability to gain access to news and other information before it hits the press, access a whole encyclopedia right on line, make Airline ticket reservations, and much, much more.

Well, if any part of this appeals to you, then go ahead, get that modem, and start at it. Don't be afraid, all modem users were novices at one time, and are more than willing to help you, both online and offline, through the meeting, or a simple phone call.

Just one thing that I must warn you of, and that is that the world telecommunications is fun and rewarding, but is also addicting! Take the plunge, hope to see you soon.

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January 1987

ST user™

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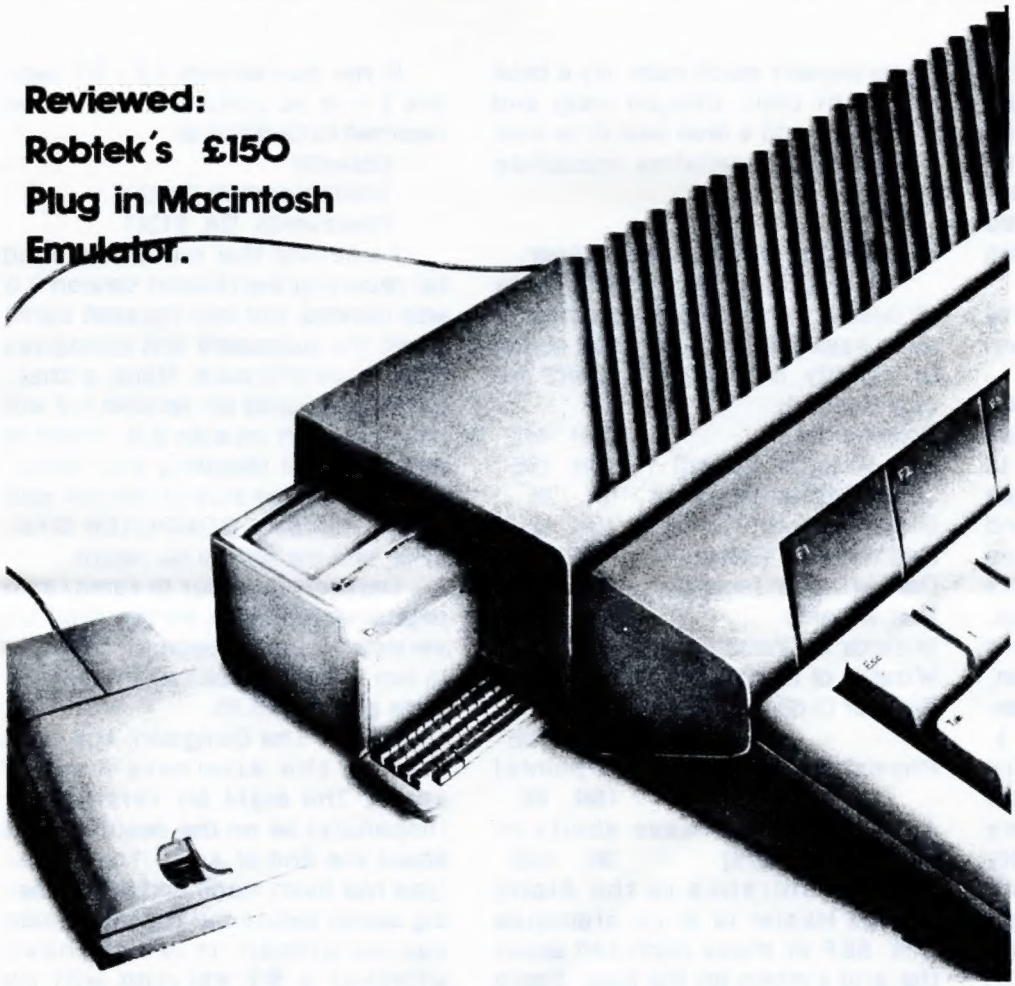
Reviewed:
Robtek's £150
Plug in Macintosh
Emulator.



- Logistix - Spreadsheet, Database, Business Graphics, plus a forth dimension.
- Flight Simulator II - Take off into the sky blue pixels of your colour monitor!
- Programming - The start of a new series on Fast Basic

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ALTERNATE REALITY INFO

by Mike Sherwood

The source of infomation for this article was a telephone interview with Karen Leeds of Intellicreations Inc. conducted on March thirtieth. Also used as a source was a hint sheet supplied to registred owners by Intellicreations Inc. (also known as Datasoft)

First a few hints to help begining players. These hints are for both eight bit and ST versions.

In the early part of the game, don't worry about spending your money on weapons. It's better to find them after encounters and use your money for food, drink, and sleep. The key is to start with the highest possible stats, especially Charm, Intelligence,and Strength. Be sure that your hit points are high. Once you aquire a weapon, ready or use it as your primary weapon (don't wait until an encounter).

A word of caution: if you're overly aggressive when you first begin playing, you won't get very far. Remember, you enter The City with fairly low stats and are in no position to attack everything in sight and expect to live. Use caution and common sense during encounters.

Once you have a little bit of experience, try going out at night. Skeletons, Giant Rats and the like are ok to attack and useful for developing a higher level character. Also some of the best treasures are found at night. Be careful, though: you can get disease from animal bites, mold spores, and black slime.

If your still hungry and thirsty after eating and drinking in a tavern, you didn't eat or drink enough. Water is best for thirst: two or three drinks usally do the trick. food is tougher: if you haven't much cash, try a bowl or two of chili. Dragon meat and pemmican add a food packet to your collection and satisfies immediate hunger.

Now for the experienced player:

Below is a list of co-ordinates to all twelve guilds (if your documentation says there are fourteen guilds in The City, it is incorrect: there are only twelve):

Thieves' [skill]	35N, 44E
Blue Wizards' [speed]	48N, 19E
Light Wizards' [wisdom]	5N, 3E
Green Wizards' [stamina]	43N, 12E
Red Wizards' [strength]	15N, 48E
Dark Wizards' [charm]	22N, 34E
Star Wizards'	12N, 28E
Wizards of Chaos [charm]	60N, 51E
Wizards of Law [wisdom]	50N, 62E
Guild of Order [intelligence]	50N, 58E
Physicians' [increases hit points]	15N, 6E
Assassins' [increases ability to suprise attackers]	3N, 56E

The entrance to the Alpha Omega Healer is at co-ordinates 21N, 5EF or those confused about the grid system on the map, begin from the bottom left-hand corner of the map and count upwards (north), and to the right (east). Count that bottom-most square as 1 North, 1 East.

More hints can be obtained from Datasoft when you return the product registration card included with the program documentation. It is very important to return this card (something I didn't know until my conversation with Karen) so that you can keep up on valuable information and updates.

If you own version 1.2 (ST owners) it is no good and should be returned to Datasoft at:

Datasoft
19808 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA. 91311

I was told that the turn around for receiving the revised version 2.0 was minimal and that Datasoft cares about it's customers and apologizes for any inconvience. Note: a character developed on version 1.2 will not work with version 2.0. There is no charge for recutting your defective disk, but be sure to include your name, address, COMPUTER SYSTEM, and the reason for return.

Datasoft is about to release an extensive hint book for the Atari ST version. It should become available in two to three weeks at an approximate price of $9.95.

About The Dungeon, the next step in the Alternate Reality series: The eight bit version will (hopefully) be on the dealers shelf about the end of April. The prototype has been made and is now being tested before the documentation can be written. It is not known whether a ST version will be released at this time, but if it is we won't see it until late this year at the earliest (those of us at the C.E.S. last June still remember the August to September release date for The Dungeon).

There are two entrances to The Dungeon from The City and The Dungeon will have four levels each more perilous than the last. In The Dungeon you will be able to reverse the reputation of a " bad " character and thus give your character a shot at redemption. ••

reprinted from member newsletter
Lawrence Atari Computer Club
Lawrence, Kansas

Laid back with (a) Fifth

by John Unger Zussman

From Info World, Oct 4, 1982
downloaded from MACRO exchange 617-667-7388

Basic, Fortran, Cobol... These programming languages are well known and (more or less) well loved throughout the computer industry. There are numerous other languages, however, that are less well known yet still have ardent devotees. In fact, these little-known languages generally have the most fanatic admirers. For those who wish to know more about these obscure languages — and why they are obscure — I present the following catalog.

SIMPLE ... SIMPLE is an acronym for Sheer Idiot's Mono Purpose Programming Lingusitic Environment. This language, developed at the Hanover College for Technological Misfits, was designed to make it impossible to write code with errors in it. The statements are, therefore confined to BEGIN, END, and STOP. No matter how you arrange the statements, you can't make a syntax error.

Programs written in SIMPLE do nothing useful. Thus they achieve the results of programs written in other languages without the tedious, frustrating process of testing and debugging.

SLOBOL ... SLOBOL is best known for the speed, or lack of it, of its compiler. Although many compilers allow you to take a coffee break while they compile, SLOBOL compilers allow you to take a trip to Bolivia to pick up the coffee. Forty-three programmers are known to have died of boredom sitting at their terminals while waiting for a SLOBOL program to compile. Weary SLOBOL programmers often turn to a related (but infinitely faster) language, COCAINE.

VALGOL ... (With special thanks to Dan and Betsy "Moon Unit" Pfau) - From its modest beginnings in southern California's San Fernando Valley, VALGOL is enjoying a dramatic surge of popularity across the industry.

VALGOL commands include REALLY, LIKE, WELL and Y$KNOW. Variables are assigned with the LIKE and TOTALLY operators. Other operators include the "CALIFORNIA BOOLEANS", FERSURE, and NOWAY. Repetitions of code are handled in FOR-SURE loops. Here is a sample VALGOL program:

```
14 LIKE. Y$KNOW (I MEAN) START
%% IF PI A =LIKE BITCHEN AND 01 B =LIKE TUBULAR AND 9 C
=LIKE GRODY**MAX 4K (FERSURE)**2
18 THEN 41 FOR I=LIKE 1 TO OH MAYBE 100
86 DO WAH + (DITTY**2)
9 BARF(I) =TOTALLY GROSS(OUT) -17 SURE
1F LIKE BAG THIS PROGRAM
? REALLY
$$ LIKE TOTALLY (Y'KNOW)
```

VALGOL is characterized by its unfriendly error messages. For example, when the user makes a syntax error, the interpreter displays the message, GAG ME WITH A SPOON!

LAIDBACK ... Historically, VALGOL is a derivative of LAIDBACK, which was developed at the (now defunct) Marin County Center for T'ai Chi, Mellowness, and Computer Programming, as analternative to the more intense atmosphere in nearby silicon valley. The center was ideal for programmers who liked to soak in hot tubs while they worked. Unfortunately, few programmers could survive there for long, since the center outlawed pizza and RC Cola in favor of bean curd and Perrier.

Many mourn the demise of LAIDBACK because of its reputation as a gentle and nonthreatening language. For example, LAIDBACK responded to syntax errors with the message, SORRY MAN, I CAN'T DEAL WITH THAT.

SARTRE ... Named after the late existential philosopher. SARTRE is an extremely unstructured language. Statements in SARTRE have no purpose; they just are there. Thus, SARTRE programs are left to define their own functions. SARTRE programmers tend to be boring and depressed and are no fun at parties.

FIFTH ... FIFTH is a precision mathematical language in which the data types refer to quantity. The data types range from CC, OUNCE, SHOT, and JIGGER to FIFTH (hence the name of the language). LITER, MAGNUM, and BLOTTO. Commands refer to ingredients such as CHABLIS, CHARDONNAY, CABERNET, GIN, VERMOUTH, VODKA, SCOTCH and WHATEVERSAROUND.

The many versions of the FIFTH language reflect the sophistication and financial status of its users. Commands in the ELITE dialect include VSOP and LAFITE, while commands in the GUTTER dialect include HOOTCH and RIPPLE. The latter is a favorite of frustrated FORTH programmers who end up using the language.

C- ... This language was named for the grade received by its creator when he submitted it as a class project in a graduate programming class. C- is best described as a "Low Level" programming language. In fact, the language generally requires more C- statements than machine-code statements to execute a given task. In this respect, it is very similar to COBOL

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

by Ann Hill

At the December meeting I asked you to fill out a survey about your attitudes on computers for my Master's thesis. Of the 89 members who were there, 76 of you completed the survey (thank you !). Of those 76, 65 were males and 11 females. The majority of Milatari members (53%) are between the ages of 30-49. The number of married and single people is almost evenly split. Overall, 57% of you are married and 43% are single. The majority (55%) are employed full-time while 22% of you are full-time students.

The next part of the survey asked you specific questions about your computer. Half of you have had a computer for over 4 years. 38% have had a computer 1-4 years and the rest are new computer owners of less than 12 months. The amount of time you claim to spend on the computer was very surprising considering the number of creative things I have seen and heard about among you at meetings. 40% of you spend 5 or less hours on the computer each week. 30% spend from 5-15 hours, and 13% 16-25 hours each week. 17% of your are diehards who spend 26 or more hours a week on your computers. Other family members spend even less time on the computer with 57% in the 0-5 and 30% in the 6-15 hour ranges. Many of you who filled out the survey reported using the computer the most often in your families (71%) with children being the second highest group at 16%.

Milatari members use their computers the most often for entertainment (games) and word processing. Programming and telecommunications come next.

(continued next page)

••SURVEY RESULTS••

•The computer is a useful tool in my home.
Agree - 79% Undecided - 16% Disagree - 5%

•The computer has contributed to my job security.
Agree - 32% Undecded - 42% Disagree - 20%

•Because of the computer I spend less time with other family members.
Agree - 18% Undecded - 38% Disagree - 41%

•The computer has given me more to talk about with my friends.
Agree - 57% Undecided - 28% Disagree - 15%

•The money spent on computer products could have been better spent.
Agree - 16% Undecided - 21% Disagree - 63%

•Some of my friendships have suffered because of my computer.
Agree - 10% Undecided - 16% Disagree - 73%

•I have made new friends because of my interest in computing.
Agree - 77% Undecided - 16% Disagree - 7%

•In my family there are arguments about who gets to use the computer.
Agree - 20% Undecided - 15% Disagree - 58%

•People say I spend too much time on my home computer.
Agree - 23% Undecided - 28% Disagree - 49%

•Other family members are jealous of the time I spend on the computer.
Agree - 12% Undecided - 23% Disagree - 59%

•I am jealous of the time other family members spend on the computer.
Agree - 8% Undecided - 18% Disagree - 72%

•I see less of some friends since I bought the computer.
Agree - 13% Undecided - 26% Disagree - 59%

•The computer has become a good excuse to get together with friends.
Agree - 32% Undecided - 46% Disagree - 19%

•The computer has brought my family closer together.
Agree - 18% Undecided - 59% Disagree - 22%

•People in my family have learned a lot from using our computer.
Agree - 42% Undecided - 39% Disagree - 15%

•The computer enhances the feeling of competition between family members and friends.
Agree - 16% Undecided - 49% Disagree - 31%

•Getting a computer has increased my and my family's interest in new technology.
Agree - 54% Undecided - 29% Disagree - 10%

•Since I got the computer I spend less time on my other hobbies.
Agree - 46% Undecided - 31% Disagree - 22%

•I have a hard time juggling computer time and doing household chores.
Agree - 23% Undecided - 37% Disagree - 39%

•My computer tends to sit in the corner and collect dust.
Agree - 7% Undecided - 11% Disagree - 81%

Some of the things listed under "other " were pirating (there was 1 honest person), spread sheets, newsletter, music and business, just to name a few.

Now for the meat of the survey, the attitude section.

Each question is written with the percentage of answers below it. Please note that the percentages will not always equal 100% because some people did not answer certain questions and mathematical rounding.

In general, it seems that computers have been a positive force within Milatari families. Computers have enabled many of you to make new friends and have more to talk about with your current friends. Milatari families have learned a lot from computers and have more interest in new technologies because of them.

There were many comments about Ataris and Milatari on the back of the surveys. Here are some examples of those comments:

-Loyal Atari 800 users should be buying Jay Miner (Atari) Amigas instead of those low-tech, low-powered, poor-excuse-for-a-video-game stupid ole' computers that Jack Tramiel is making at his New Commodore Corp.

-Milatari is too loosely organized. There should be more attention paid to new members who want to learn from those who know.

- There should be name-tags for the officers , and demonstrations of new software and hardware products.

-Hurray for the ST!

Many thanks once again to those of you who completed the survey.

NEW THINGS IN OUR MAILBOX

by Ron Friedel

MicroMiser Software, 1635-A Holden Avenue, Orlando, FL 32809 is offering their Micromod Turbobase software system for the 8-bit Ataris to MILATARI at 20% off of the suggested list price of $159.95. The software is a full featured database management system that is set up as a series of utilities to help run a small business with the Atari computer. Versions for the ST and the PC will be available later in this year. A demonstration package has been ordered.

GEnie (The General Electric Network for Information Exchange) is offering a special incentive to user group members. If we sign up for GEnie before Dec. 31, 1987, the normal $18 registration fee is waived. The only fee that will be charged is the normal non-prime time rate of $5.00 per hour of use at either 300 or 1200 baud. For the free sign-up, just follow these three easy steps (make sure to have a major credit card or checking account number handy to set up your personal GEnie account):

1. Set your modem for half duplex (local echo), at 300 or 1200 baud, ASCII translation.
2. Dial (toll free) 1-800-638-8369. Upon connection, enter HHH.
3. At the U#- prompt enter XJM11887,Atari and press [RETURN]. If you need additional assistance, call 1-800-638-9636.

There are a couple of new magazines that support the Atari computers. First of all there is **ALADDIN**, a magazine on a floppy disk. Versions for both the 8-bit and 16-bit computers are being published. We are filling out a questionnaire from them and hope to have more info shortly. They sent an ST disk that appeared to be blank so we can't give a report yet.

Another magazine that has been out for a few months now is **ST BUSINESS** (The Independent Publication for Atari Small Business Computer Owners). Some copies of this magazine should be in our library; if interested, take a look. ST BUSINESS is being offered to user group members at a special group rate of $20.00/yr., minimum 5 subscriptions (a savings of $5.00 over regular subscriptions and $9.70 over the cover price). So get four other people together and place an order at the next meeting.

Ron

MILATARI WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS THAT JOINED IN MARCH

Tom Bardenwerper, John Beck, Keith Christ, Jeffrey Johnson, Scott Jones, Joseph Orlando R.L. Walter, and Udo Wilharm.

AS WELL AS RENEWALS....

Karl Buschhaus, Dave Coak, John Gunther, Dan & Sandy Jarocki, Mark Klabunde, Wm Lawrence Richard Raper, Al Rognlie

ATARI'S LASER PRINTER

by Mike Fulton • reprinted from ACAOC OrnJuce

Atari's new laser printer was just debuted at the 1987 Winter Consumer Electronics show, and it offers both great value and great abilities, as well as some interesting features and possibilities.

The Atari laser printer (which doesn't seem to have a name yet; may I suggest AtariLaser?), is designed to work with an Atari ST computer with a memory size of 2 megabytes or larger. Since it uses the ST's brain and memory to work, it can't be used with any other computer. So you'll understand how the Atari Laser Printer works, let me explain how most other laser printers work.

Laser printers need a lot of power and memory to make them work, so most have a powerful computer and the required memory built in. The most common setup uses the Motorola 68000 CPU, the same as in the ST computers, and memory ranging in size from about 512K to 2 megabytes. They also have circuitry which allow them to talk to the other computer which is sending information to be printed. With all this extra circuitry, the printers tend to get a bit expensive.

And while most laser printers use a mechanism which allows 300 dots per inch resolution, vertically and horizontally, the actual abilities of the printer are entirely dependent on the amount of memory it has and the program running its computer.

It takes a lot of memory to hold all of the information for an entire page. In fact, a full page of graphics at 300 dots per inch takes just over 1 megabyte of memory just for the image data, aside from memory used for font data storage and calculations. Laser printers with less than about 1.5 megabytes of memory are restricted to lower-resolution graphics or less than full page graphics.

Also, the protocols which let the main computer tell the laser printer what to do are defined by the program running in the printer's computer. On most laser printers, that program cannot be changed, so you are stuck with one way of doing things. An HP LaserJet Plus, for example, doesn't understand the commands that tell an Apple LaserWriter what to do. On some laser printers, however, you can change or modify the program by changing or adding cartridges with additional program information encoded on ROM memory chips. However, this is still limited to whatever cartridge happens to be plugged in at any given moment. It it's not the right one, tough luck.

Finally, while most laser printers allow some memory space to be used to contain font information sent from the main computer, this is still limited by the amount of memory available in the printer. Once it's filled that's it. As with program cartridges, this method is limited to whatever font cartridge happens to be plugged in at that given moment.

Atari's laser printer, on the other hand, doesn't work like the others. Instead of having its own computer and memory, or using cartridges, it uses the ST itself to supply the brain power. The ST drives the printer's laser mechanism directly, talking to it over the ST's high speed DMA bus and bypassing the middleman. The result is a printer which can match or surpass the performance of other systems costing more than double or triple the Atari laser printers expected $1500 price.

Having the ST supply the brain power gives the Atari laser printer the possibilities to do things other laser printers cannot For example, say you have an Apple LaserWriter and you want to choose a particular font However, you haven't sent that font to the printer yet, so the printer doesn't have it at the moment. What happens? The printer can't ask the computer for the font, so it just substitutes with a font it does have. Better than nothing, but not what you asked for. There's only so much room for font data in the printer's memory, and with this setup, no way to get around the problem.

With the Atari laser printer, one could conceivable have as many fonts available as you could fit on a disk. Say perhaps a 20 megabyte or larger hard disk? The program driving the laser printer wouldn't necessarily need to worry about more than one set of font data at a time, and it could get the fonts one at a time from disk as needed. 20 megabytes, or more, on a hard disk could hold a lot of fonts.

Also, the program running the Atari laser printer could be set up to understand protocols for other printers, such as the HP LaserJet Plus or the Postscript page description language used by Apple's Laserwriter. Since the program driving the laser printer is loaded from disk into the Atari ST's memory, the possibilities are endless. There's a company which offers an add-on for the HP LaserJet which allows it to understand Postscript commands like the Apple LaserWriter. The add-on costs a few

thousand dollars. The Atari laser printer could do the same thing by changing disks.

Of course, there are a few disadvantages. Since the Atari laser printer only works with ST computers, that means that owners of PC's, Apples, and other computers won't be able to take advantage of the Atari laser printer's low price and abilities. Darn. Seriously though, it does require that you have a 2 megabyte or larger ST to be able to use it. However, I don't see much of a problem. The new Mega ST2 and Mega ST4 computers will fit that requirement, and I imagine that there will soon be larger memory add-ons for the 520 and 1040ST as well. Besides, even if $1500 is low for a laser printer, it's still not something that everybody is going to be getting. At least until the price comes down some more. **

XM301 MODEM / 1050 DRIVE BOOT FIX

• reprinted from "Phoenix", February 1987

Some users of the XM 301 modem are experiencing problems booting programs with the modem connected to their computer. The problem is with the combination of certain 1050 drives and the XM 301 modem in that it takes excessively long to load. Only a small number of 1050's have this problem, so don't worry about it too much if you are looking at buying a XM 301. I'm sure Atari has, or soon will fix the bug. The following is a fix for the problem provided by Atari Canada, and should not be attempted if you have not run into a problem or don't have the proper experience to do this type of work.

NOTE: This fix is not an official Atari upgrade. If you do it, it's at your own risk.

To correct the booting problem, you will require three 470 ohm resistors, some solder, soldering iron, wire cutters, and a Phillips screwdriver.

1. Open the XM 301 Modem and remove the PCB assembly.

2. Locate the area where the cable is attached to the board. The wires will be labeled with numbers. Some modems will have these contacts coated with a sealant. Remove the sealant carefully with your fingers, knife, or screwdriver.

3. Desolder the lines labelled 3, 9, 13, and pull the wires through the board. REMEMBER WHICH WIRE GOES INTO WHICH HOLE. Better yet, label them witha piece of tape.

4. Install each of the three 470 ohm resistors into each open hole. Push the resistors all the way in, leaving them standing upward.

5. Trim the excess wire extending through the bottom of the board, and solder the resistor in place.

6. Attach the designated wires close to the tops of the resistors, solder them in place and trim the excess wire off the resistor.

7. Be sure that none of the resistors or wires touch each other.

8. Put the modem back together.

Works fine!

NOTE: if you have no electronic experience, DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS FIX!

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NEW PUBLIC DOMAIN ST DISKS BEING ADDED IN APRIL

The following new ST disks will be added to our public domain ST library. They are filled to single-sided capacity. The cost is $5.00 for each disk, but buy 3, get 1 free. This covers the disk and copying costs.

NO.	DISK TYPE	INCLUDED PROGRAMS
091	UTILITY	Phonebook database, Autocopy-to-ramdisk, Dcopy ver 1.8, Disk catalog utility, Labeler, and Midinet, a program to hook up STs through the midi ports, and more.
092	UTILITY	Miky Dialer Ver 2, an autodialer, appointment book data base in basic, several Gem-based ARC programs, and more.
093	GAME	Quiz, Slot Machine, Star Trek game, and Monopoly.
094	GAME	ST Aggravation, Electronic Blackjack, Monopoly Ver 2, & Twixt.
095	DEMO	Fujiboink demo, Le Cube, a rotating cube demo, & Sundog.
096	DEMO	Michtron Xmas Demo, Sensori sound & pic demo, and more.
097	TINY PICS	Twenty Tiny pictures, featuring many from the movie, "Ghostbusters". Other pics with related themes added.
098	TINY PICS	Twenty three Tiny pictures, many of which have a space theme. Included are a number of beautifully annimated pics:Emerald, Emerald2, Night, Revcone, and W_course.
099	TINY PICS	Nineteen Tiny pictures: Aquirium, Castle, Comput2, Dirk, Dragon, Drkrider, Galactic, Getiton1, Graveyd, Kadafy, Laser, Mickey, Middle, Oliver, Shuttle, Skull, Skulligra, Stiog49, and Tigress.
100	DESKTOP	MILATARI Desktop Disk: A ready-made, single-sided desk-top disk. Features a "reset proof"ramdisk, extended-track formatter, and a number of accessories, including a calculator, calendar, and a multi-function accessory which will allow you to format disks or create a folder while in a gem-based program, such as a word-processor. Also featured are custom-made desktop icons. The disk icons are in the form of the MILATARI logo. The MILATARI Coldstart Key Interrupt is included.

• Dennis Wilson ST Public Domain Librarian.

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MILATARI is an independent user education group which is not affiliated with Atari Corp. The newsletter is the official publecation of MILATARI, and is intended for the education of its members, as well as for the dissemination of information concerning Atari computer products.

MILATARI membership is open to individuals and families who are interested un using and programming Atari computers. The membership includes a subscription to this newsletter and access to the club libraries. The annual membership fee is $20.00 for individuals or $25.00 for a family.

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